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## Sony VAIO VGN-FZ21M laptop

Is this the laptop for you?

by Stephen Patrick published on 7 February 2008

The Sony VAIO VGN-FZ21M is a great example of a notebook aimed at those who want to do more than just write documents and answer emails when on the move, as Sony has designed it to be a multimedia machine.

Weighing in at 2.6kg, it is not the lightest of notebooks but it has a fair degree of portability. The build quality and design are impressive as the case feels strong to the touch without it adding too much to the weight.

Open the lid and you'll find a 15.4-inch Super-TFT display that is amazingly sharp to view. We found that everyday tasks, such as websites and Word documents looked crisp, while watching DVD movies using the built-in optical drive were more than satisfactory. Unfortunately, the Sony's 1280 x 800 pixel screen resolution is too low for full HD playback, but an HDMI port lets you connect to HD ready televisions.

This isn't just any optical drive as it supports Blu-ray, both in read and write modes, so you'll be able to watch the latest HD movies, as well as back-up files to an impressive 50GB in size.

Not that you'll need to copy discs for any other reason other than security, as the 200GB hard drive that is fitted as standard is an impressive size in any notebook - particularly at this price point. It means you'll be able to store plenty of multimedia files.

With a view to multimedia, this notebook has a mainstream graphics card in the form of the Nvidia GeForce 8400M GT, which is an entry-level chip but will allow you to play most games.

It is let down by the battery life as we only managed just under 2 hours from the system which is poor by most modern standards.



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The keyboard is a good size as the keys are almost full size and have a firm action as you type. A panel of media buttons are arranged in a scroll wheel, similar to that found on an iPod, positioned above the board for quick control of music and video files.

Powered by Intel Core 2 Duo T7300 processor and backed by 2048MB of memory, we were expecting great things from this machine. However, while there's enough power for basic home use we found it slowed down when running even the most basic of multiple tasks.

When it comes to extras, you'll find an impressive webcam built-in above the screen and with a nod to formats other than Sony's own Memory Stick cards, you'll find a 3-in-1 card reader.

## VERDICT

The Sony VAIO VGN-FZ21M should be a powerhouse notebook, as it packs in all the features the modern user wants and needs. Sadly, we found it didn't live up to expectations, with the battery life and all-round performance less than ideal. On the plus side, it has a great screen and the addition of Blu-ray rewriter makes it an appealing purchase.

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Multimedia notebook

### Good

Blu-ray drive, great screen

### Bad

Poor battery life, poor performance

### Verdict

This should be a powerful and portable machine but we found it less than ground-breaking

**Price** £899

**Our score**

**7/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**